Sacisaurus

Sacisaurus is a silesaurid dinosauriform from the Late Triassic (Norian) Caturrita Formation of southern Brazil.[1] The scientific name, *Sacisaurus agudoensis*, refers to the city where the species was found, Agudo in the Rio Grande do Sul state, whereas *Sacisaurus* refers to Saci, a famous one-legged creature from Brazilian mythology, because the fossil skeleton was found with a leg missing.

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Characteristics

Sacisaurus was approximately 1.5 metres (4.9 ft) long and 70 centimetres (2.3 ft) high. Its long and strong legs indicate that it was a fast animal. According to Jorge Ferigolo, paleontologist of Zoobothanic Foundation of Rio Grande do Sul state, the biggest teeth of the genus were just 3 millimetres (0.12 in) long.

The well-preserved jaw indicates that *Sacisaurus* was an herbivore, and there is a process at the tip that resembles the ornithischian predentary bone. Further research attempted to define if *Sacisaurus* was the oldest ornithischian dinosaur. In 2011, a cladistic analysis of some of its morphological particularities found that its closest relative was the silesaurid *Diodorus*.[2]

Sacisaurus

Temporal range: Late Triassic

~225 Ma

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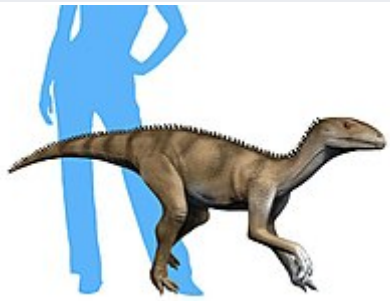

Life reconstruction of *Sacisaurus agudoensis*

Scientific classification

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Clade:	Dracohors
Clade:	†Silesauridae
Clade:	†Sulcimentisauria
Genus:	†*Sacisaurus* Ferigolo & Langer 2006

Species

- ***S. agudoensis*** Ferigolo & Langer 2006 (type)

Skeletal silhouette of *Sacisaurus agudoensis*.

History

Sacisaurus was discovered in 2001 in the small municipality of Agudo, in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul state. With 50 bones, scientists assembled the skeleton and speculated on how the animal might have lived. The fossil was presented for the first time in the 2nd Latin American Congress of Vertebrate Paleontology in 2005.

After the work of Brazilian scientists, the announcement of the discovery of the new species was made on November 1, 2006 at the University of São Paulo, Ribeirão Preto, where the bones were identified and the paper was published in the British scientific journal *Historical Biology: A Journal of Paleobiology* on October 30, 2006.[1]

The discovery helped scientists to study the feeding habits of dinosaurs and their close relatives, since it is one of the oldest ever found.

References

1. Ferigolo, J.; Langer, M.C. (2006). "A Late Triassic dinosauriform from south Brazil and the origin of the ornithischian predentary bone" (https://web.archive.org/web/20110827085145/http://sites.ffclrp.usp.br/paleo/pdf/Ferigolo_Langer_2006.pdf) (PDF). *Historical Biology*. **19** (1): 1–11. doi:10.1080/08912960600845767 (https://doi.org/10.1080%2F08912960600845767). Archived from the original (http://sites.ffclrp.usp.br/paleo/pdf/Ferigolo_Langer_2006.pdf) (PDF) on 2011-08-27.
2. Christian F. Kammerer, Sterling J. Nesbitt, and Neil H. Shubin (2011) The first basal dinosauriform (Silesauridae) from the Late Triassic of Morocco. Acta Palaeontologica Polonica (in press) (http://app.pan.pl/archive/published/app56/app20110015_acc.pdf) doi:10.4202/app.2011.0015 (https://doi.org/10.4202%2Fapp.2011.0015)

External links

- (in Portuguese) Folha online - Brasil "ganha" dinossauro de 220 milhões de anos (http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/folha/ciencia/ult306u13588.shtml)

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